

## Forcible Entry and Detainer Summons

### NOTICE TO THE DEFENDANTS:

You are required to personally appear at the time and place specified shown on this summons. If you fail to do so judgment may be entered against you for the relief asked in the complaint filed in this cause.

- A. If you dispute the claim, you must file your appearance and pay the required fee with the Clerk of the Circuit Court before the date of trial. If you fail to file an appearance and pay the fee, a judgment by default may be entered against you, ordering that you be evicted. The appearance fee may be waived by Court order. You must file a Petition for Leave to Defend as a Poor Person, asking the court to waive the fee. A form petition may be found in the Office of the Circuit Clerk, at the Self-Help Center, located on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Law & Justice Center, 104 West Front Street, Room 665, Bloomington, IL, or online at <http://mclean.illinoislegalaid.org>.
- B. If **both** parties (Plaintiff and Defendant) do not have an attorney, the Court will offer mediation at your first court date. Mediation is an opportunity for all parties to privately resolve your dispute with a trained mediator. The mediation will take place the same day. If you are able to reach an agreement, your appearance fee will be waived and the case will be concluded. If you refuse mediation or are unable to reach an agreement, you must pay the appearance fee, and the case will be set for trial before a judge on another day. **If you need the services of an interpreter for mediation, you should contact the Arbitration Administrator at (309) 827-7584 five business days in advance of your first court appearance.**
- C. Your failure to appear or respond to this summons in one of the above-prescribed manner may result in a judgment of default being entered against you for the amount claimed in the complaint, court costs and the sheriff may evict you.
- D. If you do not come to court, the Court may order you to move within a short period of time. IF YOU DO NOT MOVE, your landlord can have the sheriff move you and all of your belongings out. The sheriff will put your property outside and you will have to make arrangements to move it.

**PLAINTIFFS:** If both you and the Defendant do not have an attorney, the Court will offer mediation at your first court date. Mediation is an opportunity for the parties to privately resolve your dispute with a trained mediator.

You may find more information on mediation and small claims cases in the Office of the circuit Clerk, at the Self-Help Center (Room 665 at the Law & Justice Center), or online at <http://mclean.illinoislegalaid.org>.

**If you cannot find a lawyer to help you in court, the following are some options** - Depending on the amount of money you earn, you may be eligible for legal aid. Prairie State Legal Services has a toll-free advice line at (800) 531-7057. This service is available Monday through Friday from 9:05 to 11:45 a.m. and 1:05 to 4:00 p.m. You may be able to speak to an attorney about your legal problem.

Prairie State has several information guides online at <http://pslegal.org/legal%20information.htm>. Their Renter's Handbook can be found at <http://www.pslegal.org/Puglication/RentersHandbood/Rentersbook2005.pdf>.

**If you have money to pay an attorney**, you may contact the Illinois State Bar Association's Lawyer Finder Service at [www.illinoislawyerfinder.com](http://www.illinoislawyerfinder.com). This service will give you the name of a local attorney with whom you may discuss your legal problem for a very low fee. After the initial consultation, you can decide whether or not to hire the attorney.

If you are still unable to find an attorney, the McLean County Law & Justice offers the free McLean County Legal Self-Help Center. This internet-based legal self-help center will help you find information about your legal problem, videos on what to do in court, and forms related to arbitration/small claims, etc.

The McLean County Legal Self-Help center is located on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the McLean County law & Justice Center, 104 W. Front Street, Room 665, Bloomington, Illinois. An assistant (called the navigator) is available at the center. The navigator will help you use the self-help center and find the information you need. If you have a computer with access to the internet, you can access the Legal Self-Help Center online at <http://mclean.illinoislegalaid.org>.